

The Shadow of Santa

By William Gerard Chapman

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"WHEW! it bites like a No. 2 Newhouse trap," grumbled Pa Schoonmaker, closing the set-tin' room door against the icy blast and rubbing his tingling cheeks. He stamped his feet before the stove in which the hickory was burning with such a roar of comfortable warmth as almost to drown the shrill whistling of the December wind outside the farm house.

"Hello, what's the matter with Herbie?" The youngest of his three boys, a tiny misshapen child who had suffered a boyhood of pain and deformity since his nurse had dropped him in his baby days, was huddled in the corner beside the woodbox crying silently, except when an uncontrollable sob shook his thin little frame.

"Been teasing you have they? I'll tease them—with a stove-length, I will. Can't have anything like this the night before Christmas, not by a jugful." He advanced to the unhappy child and comforted him in rough but kindly fashion, picking him up as though he were a wisp of hay and pressing him to his ample shoulder. "What you boys been doing to Herbie, hey?"

There was no severity in the question, for the sturdy brothers, Petey and Normie, always were patient and kindly in their attitude toward the less fortunate child, and only unintentionally and in boyish carelessness occasionally hurt the sensitive little fellow.

"What is it, Herbie? Tell dad." The sobbing broke forth unrestrainedly under the hearty kindness of the sweet natured farmer, and then slowly subsided. Pa Schoonmaker waited patiently until the child was calm and then repeated his question.

"Normie said there wasn't a Santa Claus; said it was all a humbug, an'



that you an' ma fixed the tree an' all. 'Taint so!" he shrilled defiantly. "I heard him once a-fixin' the tree last Christmas mornin' when I woked up early. They is a Santa Claus, ain't they, pa?"

"There shorely is, youngster," affirmed his father, directing a reproving glance at his two older sons. "You bet there is a Santa Claus; you'll see tomorrow when you get all the things he's going to bring you. Now you let your ma put you to bed, so's you can get up early, and don't worry no more about it."

But Herbie was not fully satisfied. Grown folks would say most anything to comfort little boys, and his faith had been too rudely shaken to be so quickly restored. Prettfully and with a deeper droop to his sensitive little mouth he suffered his mother to take him to his small bed chamber opening off the set-tin' room.

"We didn't go to do it, pa," Petey began when the door was closed on Herbie, forestalling his father's further questioning. "Herbie heard Normie and me talking about Santa Claus being only a yarn for little tads; we didn't know he was about. He bust out crying and—well, we didn't know what to say. Honest, pa, we wouldn't 'a' told him for anything." Petey looked nearly as woebegone as the disillusioned child.

"You'd oughter be more careful what you say when Herbie's nigh," admonished Pa Schoonmaker. "It'd spile his Christmas if he thought there wasn't any such thing as Santa Claus. Now we gotter prove it to him some way that there is, and you boys better figure it out. And it's nigh time you

went to bed too; ma and me'll have to be a-fixin' the tree pretty soon."

The fragrant young spruce, newly cut and shelled down from the snow mantled ridge, was brought in from the woodshed. Petey and Normie, deep in thought, assisted in setting it up. Unless they could devise some means of restoring their little brother's belief in the patron saint of Christmas their own pleasure in the day would be spoiled too.

Normie nudged Petey. "Look at the funny shadder the tree makes on the wall. Looks for all the world like—" "I got it!" Petey interrupted in a tense whisper, quivering with the grand idea that had come to him with Normie's remark.

With beaming face he explained his scheme to his brother while their father was engaged in propping up the tree. Quickly they were busy with a cardboard box, scissors and pencil, and under their nimble fingers was evolved in a few moments a grotesque figure that in their enthusiastic eyes bore an excellent likeness to Kris Kringle.

Softly the door to the bedroom was opened. Herbie was fast asleep. The figure was experimentally placed at different points before the coal oil lamp until its shadow rested upon the



PA AND MA SCHOONMAKER TIP TOED TO THE DOOR.

wall of the inner room just where the eyes of the sleeper, on opening, would fall upon it. Then the door was closed again.

Pa Schoonmaker grinned when the significance of these operations dawned on him. "Reckon maybe the old feller will leave something for you two, after all. You stood a mighty good chance of having your stockings overlooked, running him down that away to one of his friends. Now go to bed, both of you. I'll open the door and rattle things some when ma and me fixes the tree; Herbie'll be sure to wake up and see the shadder. Hope it satisfies the pore little feller."

The boys went happily to bed. Pa and Ma Schoonmaker dressed the tree and laid at its base the assortment of presents for the children. The bedroom door had been opened toward the last and the two were silent as they completed their work, rattling the paper parcels and listening expectantly.

A slight movement in the bed ensued, followed by a rustling of the coverlet and the sound of a small body suddenly sitting up. Then a long-drawn, happy sigh came to their straining ears as the occupant of the little room nestled again into the pillows. His breathing once more became regular and Pa and Ma Schoonmaker tip-toed to the door and looked within. The child stirred uneasily.

"He's awake," breathed Sam, laying a cautioning hand on his wife's arm. "No, he ain't," she reassured him. "Listen."

The childish lips were muttering sleepily. "They is a Santa Claus—I seen him—I seen his shadder—" And with another sigh of contentment all doubting fled before the coming of deeper sleep.

Pa and Ma Schoonmaker drew back softly and closed the door, a happy light in their eyes.

"Won't he have it on the boys tomorrow, though!" chuckled Sam as they mounted the stairs.

Reign of Good Cheer.
Bring me a garland of holly,
Rosemary, ivy and bay;
Gravity's nothing but folly,
'Till after the Christmas day.

DISGUSTED WITH SANTA.



"What's the matter with him?" "He only got a new slate and his old last year's sled painted over. Now he says he don't care if there ain't no Santa Claus!"



You never saw, I don't believe,
The really, truly Santa Claus
Who comes around on Christmas Eve
Behind his reindeers' prancing paws,
Who stops at ev'rybody's house
(At least where there are girls and boys)
And leaves, as slyly as a mouse,
His books and dolls and games and toys.



I know how Santa looks because
He has a kind of Grandpa style.
The smile you see on Santa Claus
Is just like any Grandpa's smile.
Our Grandpas have the same white hair;
He has the wrinkles Grandpas do—
They're so alike I do declare
It's hard to tell between the two!



And yet we all know how he looks,
The little children's patron saint—
We've seen his face in picture-books,
So red and jolly, queer and quaint.
It's wreathed around with hair as white
As Winter's piles of drifted snow,
And all his features are alight
With happy smile and cheery glow.



They both are always full of fun
And have a twinkle in their eyes,
They both are kind to ev'ryone
(Especially of children's size).
That's why that I've made up my mind
That Grandpas all are friends of his,
That Santa is so good and kind
Because he's like a Grandpa is!



Yes, that's the way that Santa seems,
The Santa that the children praise,
The Santa that they see in dreams
While waiting for the Christmas days.
Why, I can shut my eyes and see
Him just as plain as if he came!
I know just how he looks to me,
And that to you he looks the same.

YULE-TIDE DECORATIONS

By ROSALIE MENDEL



A Christmas Dinner Table.

MERRY CHRISTMAS! The very word expresses the spirit of the day. Christmas is the embodiment of joy and mirthfulness, a glorious day of gaiety and merriment for old and young. Let us all be children at Christmas time, and enter into the preparations and plans for the day with youthful fervor.

Everyone is occupied with the preparations for the gala occasion. The custom of decorating the homes with Christmas greens is increasing each year. Surely it is a happy thought in the midst of winter at the Yule tide season to bring the greens from the woods. The many traditions connected with holly and mistletoe make them all the more appropriate for use as decorations. The brilliant glowing scarlet of the holly berries and the green of the evergreen have always been associated with Christmas.

With a very small investment one can easily arrange many unique effects in decorations for the home and table that will accord with the spirit of the season.

Unless the Christmas tree is going to be a surprise, and you intend to trim it behind closed doors in the greatest of secrecy, let the children assist in fashioning many of the ornaments and trinkets, and they will have double the pleasure out of it. The little ones will certainly delight in stringing the popcorn with which to festoon the tree. If the popcorn is strung on wire it can be arranged most effectively. If you wish, you can dye some of the corn red and string it alternately, one red and one white kernel. The nimble little fingers can string chains of cranberries or cut stars out of gilt paper. Paper link chains can be made out of any color to harmonize with the color scheme of the tree. Paste narrow strips of paper to form rings and slip one link through another and paste securely.

It is very simple to gild nuts, and they are quite an addition to a tree when suspended with gilt cord. Snow balls are made by packing white tissue paper tight in the shape of an orange, then pasting white cotton on the ball. The cotton is dusted with diamond dust and gives a glittering effect. Icicles are made of white fringe tissue paper that has been dipped into a solution of alum. The green of the tree can also be given a frosted effect if it is touched with a solution of alum. The Christmas goodies can be put in bags of tartan. Don't forget that the large presents and heavy decorations of the tree should be at the bottom.

A pretty tree for the table is the pepper plant, which can be purchased at any florist's. The little plant can be trimmed as a Christmas tree for the central decoration of the table. Around the bottom of the tree is heaped a mound of cotton dusted with mica. At each place is a little red flower pot containing a small souvenir which is hidden by a spray of mistletoe. The souvenir can be something suggestive of the personality of the guest. Over the table is suspended by red ribbons a bunch of snow balls of white cotton sprinkled with mica. The candle shades are of ornamental sprays of holly, and a little piece of holly is pasted on the place card.

The table illustrated has the star shaped poinsettia for its main feature. If it is not possible to procure the natural poinsettia, beautiful ones can be obtained made out of crepe paper.

The basket for the center piece is heaped with poinsettias and ferns. Favors are hidden among the flowers, and ribbons are attached to them extending to each plate. A large Christmas bell adds to the festive appearance of the room. This bell is made on a wire frame 18 inches tall, covered with crushed tissue paper.

The little baskets for the salted almonds are made of 12 poinsettia leaves pasted neatly around a small paper cup.

For place cards use a white card to which is attached a small bell about two inches high. Tie on the top with a small bow of red baby ribbon.

Instead of silver napkin rings use rings made of pasteboard covered with red crepe paper to harmonize with the rest of the decorations. A crepe paper napkin designed in poinsettias would be very appropriate.

If one prefers to use a tablecloth of paper instead of damask, the same idea can be carried out by using paper in the same color scheme. Ruffle the paper around the lower edge and have two flounces, the first of plain white and the second of the decorated paper.

Candle shades are made of cardboard frames. Cut the petals from the crepe paper the same as for the other flowers, and paste around frame, finishing it with two large green leaves and a small bow of red ribbon.

Many of the dishes served can be garnished with red beets, radishes or red peppers.

A poinsettia salad could be placed at each place. Slice off the top of a large red apple and scrape out as much of the inside as possible, fill the apple with equal portions of apple cut in small cubes, chopped celery and nuts. Moisten this mixture with cream salad dressing.

Cut pimentoes in petal shaped pieces and arrange them in the form of a poinsettia on the plate. Set the apple filled with the mixture on center of plate and use small petals of the pimentoes to trim the top of the apple.

If ice cream is served for dessert, pistachio and cherry make a good combination.

As Christmas is the season of toys, table decorations which would seem absurd at any other time are very fitting on this occasion.

A table with a snow man in the center made on a wire frame and covered with cotton is very effective. Have smaller snow men at each place. Snow balls placed in groups all over the table may be surrounded with sprays of holly. The candle shades can be made of wire covered with cotton to form snow man's face.

The bonbon boxes can be small boxes covered with red crepe paper to represent a Santa Claus cap. Paste the paper around the edge of box, leaving the crepe twice the height of the box. Fringe a small piece of crepe paper to represent the tassel. Around the edge of the cap cut a band of white crepe one-half inch wide and dot with ink to represent ermine. If the cream is molded in the shape of Santa Claus in individual forms, or in the shape of snow balls, it will add to the fun of the dinner table.

Another table may have a Christmas star for a variation in the way of table ornamentation. A star may be formed of holly and edged with ribbon. The guests' places are between the points of the star. In the center of the star a candlestick with shades ornamented with stars cut out of crepe paper is placed. Stars of paper are hung all around the table.

From the chandelier by means of wire suspend a string of stars. Miniature stars decorate the candy boxes, and the favors are contained in star-shaped boxes. The nut cups are made of a six-inch star cut from cardboard covered with white crepe paper edged in gold.

The following menu may assist you in deciding what to have for Christmas dinner:

Olives	Celery	Radishes
Blue Points on Half Shell		
Cream of Celery Soup		
Roasted Goose		
Baked Sweet Potatoes		
Creamed Cauliflower	Apple Sauce	
Lettuce and Pimento Salad		
Individual Plum Pudding	Hard Sauce	
Raisins	Fruit Nuts	
Camembert Cheese	Oranges	

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